

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (cancelled)

Claim 2. (currently amended): A device for reducing the vertebral stress on a person sleeping prone on a sleep surface without requiring the face of the person to be directed toward the sleep surface, said device comprising a head piece and a torso piece ~~and a plurality of other elements~~, wherein said head piece and said torso piece ~~and said plurality of other elements~~ are deployable on said sleep surface so that when said person lies prone on said sleep surface, a cheek of said person is supported by said head piece, wherein said head piece has a head-piece shape that results in said cheek forming a particular cheek angle with said surface, wherein said head-piece shape is chosen so as to ensure that said cheek angle is large enough that any amount of said stress that occurs is minimal but without said cheek angle being so large that said face is directed ~~directed~~ downward, and wherein said head piece, while supporting said cheek, does not extend longitudinally as far as a shoulder of said person.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The device of Claim 2, wherein said head piece presents a wedge shape to said cheek when said head piece supports said cheek of said person, and wherein said wedge shape is characterized by a head-piece thickness increasing from a head-piece thin edge to a head-piece thick end with a rate of increase determined by a head-wedge angle.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The device of Claim 3, wherein with said head piece ~~is in~~ place and said person lying on said surface, said cheek is in contact with an upper surface of said head piece and said person is facing said head-piece thin edge.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The device of Claim 4, ~~wherein said plurality of other elements includes a torso piece,~~ wherein said torso piece is deployable between said surface and a torso of said person in such manner as to prevent said torso from rolling in a head-turn-increasing angle.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The device of Claim 5, wherein said torso piece is wedge shaped and said torso piece has a torso-piece thickness such that said torso-piece thickness increases from a torso-piece thin edge to torso-piece thick edge.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The device of Claim 5, wherein when said device is deployed with said person said torso-piece thin end is fitted under one edge of said torso and wherein said torso-piece thickness increases in a distal direction from said edge of said torso.

Claim 8 (cancelled)

Claim 9 (currently amended): The device of Claim 2, wherein said head piece is comprised of a head block, ~~a head block cover fitted tightly over said head block,~~ and a head pillow enveloping said head block ~~and said head block cover,~~ and wherein said head block is wedge-shaped with a varying thickness defined by a head-piece angle.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The device of Claim 9, wherein said head block is made of a hard material, ~~said head block cover is made of a thin soft material,~~ and said head pillow is soft and sufficiently compressible that head-wedge angle determines said cheek angle of said person lying prone on said sleep surface.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The device of Claim 5, wherein said torso piece is comprised of a torso block made of a non-yielding material, ~~a torso block cover fitted tightly over said torso block,~~ and a torso pillow enveloping said torso block ~~and said torso block cover,~~ and

wherein said torso block is wedge-shaped with a varying thickness defined by a torso-piece angle.

Claim 12 (new): The device of Claim 9, said head piece further comprising a head-block cover that fits tightly over said head block.

Claim 13 (new): The device of Claim 11, said torso piece further comprising a torso-block cover that fits tightly over said torso block.

Claim 14 (new): The device of Claim 12 wherein said head block is in cross section an isosceles triangle.

Claim 15 (new): A sleep-support system for supporting a person sleeping prone on a sleep surface, said sleep-support system comprising:

- a torso piece and a head piece;

- wherein said head piece has a head-piece wedge shape formed by a flat base and a head-support surface having a transverse slope that is determined by a head-piece wedge angle, said head-support surface having a high end and a low end;

- wherein said head-piece wedge angle is selected to support a head of said person at a slight angle relative to said mattress so as to provide comfort while minimizing vertebral stress on said person;

- wherein said torso piece has a torso-piece wedge shape formed by a flat base and a torso-support surface having a transverse slope that is determined by a torso-piece wedge angle, said torso-support surface having a high end and a low end, said high end of said head-support surface being a height that is at least twice the height of the high end of said torso-support surface; and

- wherein said torso piece has a torso-piece length dimension and said head piece has a head-piece length dimension and wherein said torso-piece length dimension is sufficiently long to support a torso of said person and to prevent said torso from rotating, and said head-piece

length dimension is sufficiently long to support a head of said person, without supporting said torso of said person.

Claim 16 (new): The sleep-support system of Claim 15, wherein said head-wedge angle is approximately 60 degrees.

Claim 17 (new): The sleep-support system of Claim 15, wherein said head-piece includes a head block made of a rigid material and a head-piece pillow cover that covers at least said head-support surface with a compressible cushioning material.

Claim 18 (new): The sleep-support system of Claim 15, wherein said torso-piece includes a torso block made of a rigid material and a torso-piece pillow cover that covers at least said torso-support surface with a compressible cushioning material.

Claim 19 (new): Method for permitting the head of a prone sleeper on a bed surface having a longitudinal direction and transverse direction to be comfortably oriented without creating risky cervical-spinal stress, said method comprising the steps of

- (a) placing on said bed surface a cylindrical torso piece having a wedge-shaped cross section perpendicular to a torso-piece longitudinal axis, wherein said wedge-shaped cross section of said torso piece is characterized by a thin side and a thick side and by a torso wedge angle located at said thin side of said torso piece, and wherein said torso-piece longitudinal axis approximates in length a human torso;
- (b) orienting said torso piece with said torso-piece longitudinal axis parallel to said longitudinal direction and said thin side of said torso piece adjacent to one side of said sleeper;
- (c) placing a cylindrical head piece having a head-piece longitudinal axis and a wedge-shaped cross section perpendicular a head-piece longitudinal axis, wherein said wedge-shaped cross section of said head piece is characterized by a thin side and a thick side and by a head wedge angle located at said thin side of said torso piece,

and wherein said head-piece longitudinal axis approximate in length a human head, orienting said head piece with said head-piece longitudinal axis parallel to said longitudinal direction with said thin side of said head piece facing said thin side of said torso piece;

- (d) slipping said head piece upwards with respect to said sleeper and then between said bed surface and said head of said sleeper so that said head of said sleeper fully supported by said head piece while facing said thin side of said head piece.